**Brett Murrey**

**ET 8050**

**Draft Action Research Project Progress Report**

***Title:***

Bridging Communication Gaps for Low Socioeconomic Students with Technology

***Needs Assessment:***

A need for improvement in 4th grade Low Socioeconomic communication skills is a result of looking at previous TAKS Writing scores for similar students, classroom assessments in writing, and informal student communication assessments.

***Objectives and Vision of the action research project:***

I reviewed the data that I was able to gather and determined that the students that come from low socioeconomic homes had a lower ability to communicate both socially and academically. The objective was to determine using technology as a source of additional communication for these students would assist them in communicating effectively in both social and academic settings.

***Review of the Literature and Action Research Strategy:***

When developing my action research plan, I wanted to use as many current classroom technology tools as possible with in the curriculum. “A technology enriched learning environment has the potential to deepen classroom instruction to make it more meaningful and assist in the development of higher-order thinking skills” (Niemiec, R. P., & Walberg, H. J., 1992). When I began working on my Action Research Plan, I discussed my ideas with my assistant principal, superintendant, the 3rd grade level, and 4th grade level teachers.

***Articulate the Vision:***

When sharing the vision with staff and students, I explained the objectives, goals and vision during informal meetings. As progress was made with the project, I will keep staff and students up to date on the status of the project. I have not shared my vision with parents or community members as of yet. A potential plan for sharing would be to present data and findings, utilizing a power point presentation, at a district board meeting.

***Manage the Organization:***

My Action Research Plan requires the assistance of the 4th grade teachers and students from each of the 4th grade classrooms. Since I am using existing computers and free online technology tools I did not need to purchase any supplies or materials. I have looked at several written samples of student work from the reading and writing teacher as well as discussed communication issues with the math teacher. I have also completed informal assessments of 4th grade students to collect data from them on their areas of concern. From this information, I developed my plan for using technology in social and academic settings to improve overall communication skills for low socioeconomic students in 4th grade.

***Manage Operations:***

I used the needs of the teachers and students that I have acquired to develop the strategies that I will use to increase communication skills through technology. I am asking my students to communicate with each other through blogs, discussion boards, and I am also communicating with them through these avenues as well. The data that I collected showed that these students vocabulary was lacking in both social and academic settings. Students are not able to communicate their feeling with others in a social setting whether verbally or nonverbally. Students struggled with many aspect of the academic language that is used on worksheet and assessments in the school setting.

***Respond to Community Interest and Needs:***

In the Action Research Plan, special accommodations were made for students with special needs. Extra time is offered to help students complete the tasks at hand. Students are also not penalized for spelling errors, but encouraged to find tools to help them communicate more effectively (ex spell check, dictionary, etc.). Students are allowed to work use the technology at school to prevent exclusion based on economic status or availability of technology outside of school.